

IN THE CLAIMS

Please **cancel** claims 7 – 9.. Please also **amend** claim 11, and **add** new claims 12-14, as shown in the complete list of claims that is presented below.

1. (currently amended) A staple puller for removing a wire staple from a stack of pages, comprising:

a first jaw member having a first side wall with a front end portion and a back end portion, the front end portion of the first side wall having a first tooth that is configured to slide under the staple, the first side wall also having a first clamping surface;

a second jaw member having a second side wall with a front end portion and a back end portion, the front end portion of the second side wall having a second tooth that is configured to slide under the staple, the second side wall also having an edge that provides a second clamping surface; and

means for pivotably connecting the first and second jaw members so that they are movable with respect to one another between an open position and a closed position, the first and second teeth being disposed side-by-side in the closed position and the first and second clamping surfaces facing one another in the closed position so as to permit the wire of the staple to be gripped between the clamping surfaces if the staple has been removed only partially from the stack of pages.

wherein the first side wall has a slot and a flange at an edge of the slot, the flange providing the first clamping surface, and

wherein the first side wall has a major portion that includes the first tooth and that lies substantially in a plane, and the flange extends transverse to the plane so as to overlap the second clamping surface when the jaw members are in their closed position.

2. (original) The staple puller of claim 1, wherein the first side wall has a first hole between the front end portion and back end portion thereof, wherein the second side wall

has a second hole between the front end portion and back end portion thereof, and wherein the means for pivotably connecting extends through the first and second holes.

3. (original) The staple puller of claim 2, wherein the means for pivotably connecting comprises a rivet.

4. (original) The staple puller of claim 3, further comprising a spring that urges the first and second jaw members toward the open position.

5. (original) The staple puller of claim 4, further comprising a first plastic finger grip attached to the first jaw member and a second plastic finger grip attached to the second jaw member.

6. (original) The staple puller of claim 2, wherein the first and second clamping surfaces are located at the back end portions of the first and second side walls, respectively.

Claims 7 - 9 (canceled).

10. (original) The staple puller of claim 1, wherein the first and second jaw members are made from sheet metal.

11. (currently amended) An improved staple puller of the type that includes first and second jaw members that are made from sheet metal, and means for pivotably connecting the first and second jaw members so that they are movable between an open position and a closed position, the first jaw member having side walls with teeth and the second jaw member having side walls with teeth, the teeth of the first jaw member being disposed between the teeth of the second jaw member when the jaw members are in their closed position, wherein the improvement comprises:

at least one of the side walls has a bent flange that provides a clamping surface, the clamping surface provided by the flange being aligned with an edge of another of the side walls so as to overlap said edge when the jaw members are in their closed position.

12. (new) The improved staple puller of claim 11, wherein the bent flange of the at least one of the side walls extends outward from the at least one of the side walls at an edge of a slot in the at least one of the side walls, the slot being a closed slot that is surrounded on all sides thereof by sheet metal.

13. (new) The staple puller of claim 10, wherein the slot is a closed slot that is surrounded on all sides by sheet metal.

14. (new) The staple puller of claim 1, wherein the second clamping surface and the second tooth lie in a common plane.

15. (new) An improved staple puller of the type that includes first and second jaw members that are made from sheet metal, and means for pivotably connecting the first and second jaw members so that they are movable between an open position and a closed position, the first jaw member having side walls with teeth and the second jaw member having side walls with teeth, the teeth of one of the jaw members being disposed between the teeth of the other of the jaw members when the jaw members are in their closed position, wherein the improvement comprises:

the first jaw member has an edge that provides a first clamping surface, and
the second jaw member has a closed slot that is surrounded on all sides by sheet metal, and a flange at an edge of the slot that is bent outward from the sheet metal adjacent the slot such that a side of the flange provides a second clamping surface that overlaps the first clamping surface when the jaw members are in their closed position.

16. (new) The improved staple puller of claim 15, wherein the edge that provides the first clamping surface is an edge of one of the side walls of the first jaw member, and the slot in the second jaw member is located in one of the side walls of the second jaw member.